

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7462

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 03251

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, VS, CB

SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES TO FRANCE

REFS: (A) STATE 23858; (B) PARIS 27484; (C) PRAT//

ROSENTHAL LETTER DEC. 24, 1975

1. CONGEN AND EMBOFF SAW AMBASSADOR CHAYET 2 FEBRUARY.

CHAYET GAVE FOLLOWING FIGURES FOR REFUGEES ADMITTED  
BETWEEN MAY 15, 1975 AND 3 JANUARY 1976: 3,632

VIETNAMESE, 3,303 KHMER, 2,708 LAO FOR A TOTAL OF  
9,643. THE FOREGOING CAME WITH SOME ASSISTANCE OF THE  
UNHCR. IN ADDITION, SOME 2,500 TO 3,000 CAME AS  
REFUGEES BY THEIR OWN MEANS. FURTHER, SOME 4,000 TO  
5,000 INDOCHINESE HAVE ARRIVED IN FRANCE AS VISITORS  
OR WERE HERE AS STUDENTS, ETC. AND ARE REQUIRING SOME  
OF THE HELP DESTINED FOR REFUGEES. IN ADDITION THERE  
ARE THE FRENCH NATIONALS (MANY OF ASIAN ORIGIN) WHO  
ARE BEING "REPATRIATED" TO FRANCE.

2. CONTRARY TO THE MORE MODEST FIGURES CITED REF. A,  
REF. B AND REF. C, CHAYET NOW EXPECTS THAT THE GOF  
WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE IN "IN PRINCIPLE" 1,000  
REFUGEES A MONTH UNTIL JUNE -- IN REALITY THE FIGURE  
MAY BE 1,100 TO 1,200 PER MONTH. CHAYET SAID THAT HE  
HESITATED TO INDICATE ANY FIGURE FOR THE MONTHLY  
INFLUX AFTER JUNE. HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THERE WOULD  
BE NO CUT OFF IN THE FRENCH PROGRAM, NO "QUOTA", AND  
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THE GOF WOULD CONTINUE TO TAKE IN REFUGEES AS THE

CIRCUMSTANCES INDICATED AND PERMITTED. THE PRINCIPAL FACTOR REMAINED A REGULAR FLOW NOT EXCEEDING 1,000 A MONTH.

3. CHAYET SAID THAT ONE OF THE FACTORS WHICH HAD REQUIRED THE UPWARD ADJUSTMENT OF THE GOF ESTIMATES WAS THE NUMBER OF CAMBODIANS WHO HAD BEEN ABLE TO ESCAPE TO VIETNAM AND WHOM THE VIETNAMESE WERE PERMITTING TO LEAVE IF THEY COULD PROVE CAMBODIAN NATIONALITY. THE FRENCH "CONSULATE GENERAL" IN SAIGON ESTIMATED THAT THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY 20,000 CAMBODIANS WHO HAD ARRIVED; THE UNHCR ESTIMATED 10,000 TO 15,000. MOST OF THESE CAMBODIANS HAD ARRIVED ON FOOT IN SAIGON; SOME HAD DIFFICULTIES IN ESTABLISHING IDENTITY AND NATIONALITY. OF THESE REFUGEES, THE FRENCH ESTIMATED NOW ABOUT 5,000 WOULD WISH TO COME TO FRANCE -- CHAYET CONSIDERED THIS FIGURE LOW. FRANCE WOULD ATTEMPT TO TAKE IN THIS NUMBER. THERE WERE STILL SOME 4,000 TO 5,000 INDOCHINESE IN THAILAND WHO WISHED TO COME TO FRANCE. CHAYET THEREFORE THOUGHT THAT THERE MIGHT BE ANOTHER 10,000 FROM THESE TWO SOURCES ALONE WHICH WAS ALREADY THE DOUBLE OF 5,000 EXPECTED BETWEEN NOW AND JUNE.

4. EMBASSY COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THAT CHAYET IS GIVING US FIGURES AS ACCURATE AS POSSIBLE. WITH A POLICY WHICH DOES NOT FIX A QUOTA BUT ESTABLISHES RATHER VAGUE AND USUALLY GENEROUS CRITERIA, ONE CAN EXPECT THE FIGURES TO CHANGE IF THERE IS AN UNEXPECTED NEW DEVELOPMENT, COMPARABLE TO THE ARRIVAL OF THE CAMBODIANS IN VIETNAM. ALTHOUGH THE FRENCH ADMIT THAT FOR A TIME A NUMBER OF PERSONS TO WHOM THEY HAD GIVEN VISAS DID NOT USE THEM IMMEDIATELY TO COME TO FRANCE, IT IS CLEAR THAT FRANCE IS TAKING AND WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE -- BE IT AT A REGULAR PACE -- A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF THE REFUGEES CREATED BY THE DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA. RUSH

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